

NEWS RELEASE



OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

San Diego, California

***United States Attorney
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For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY – August 16, 2012

Terence J. Bonner, retired president of the National Border Patrol Union, was indicted by a federal grand jury today on charges that he used the position he held for more than two decades to divert hundreds of thousands of dollars in union funds for personal use.

U.S. Attorney Laura E. Duffy announced that the charges include conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, and forfeiture of ill-gotten gains in connection with a scheme to defraud some 14,000 dues-paying union members. The indictment says Bonner sought and obtained payment for supposedly union-related work and travel that was, in fact, personal in nature.

“These false claims included periods of time when Bonner was actually visiting his mistress in Chicago or family members, as well as trips to attend non-Union activities, such as hockey games and other sporting events,” the indictment says.

In addition, the indictment alleges that Bonner submitted expense vouchers seeking reimbursement for union-related travel expenses such as meals, car rentals, tips, luggage, books and magazines when he was actually travelling for personal reasons, including vacations and other non-union activity.

“Siphoning hundreds of thousands of dollars from hard-working fellow Border Patrol agents, many of whom put their lives on the line every day to protect this country, is a particularly troubling form of corruption that must be addressed,” Duffy said.

According to the indictment, Bonner used his presidential power to enact a number of unusual policies to benefit himself and other union officials, such as reimbursement for clothing expenses and up to \$800 a year to “purchase one or more gifts and/or meals for their spouse or ‘significant other’ and/or children at any time of their choosing.”

Bonner also initiated “lost wages,” a policy requiring the union to pay premium rates for work completed on Sundays, holidays and night shifts – pay that was supposed to give union officials the same level of compensation that Border Patrol agents would be entitled to for working those undesirable shifts.

However, the indictment says Bonner submitted false claims for “lost wages,” including “seeking ‘lost wages’ for time frames when he was not working on union activities but at home, downloading, viewing and archiving” inappropriate material, the indictment says.

Bonner also submitted and obtained reimbursement “for dozens of hard drives used to store” inappropriate material that was “not maintained in furtherance of union activity and whose presence on Border Patrol computers would have been specifically prohibited by government policy.”

Bonner and an alleged co-conspirator, identified in the indictment as a union officer, concealed from the Union’s membership “the manner in which Bonner was being personally enriched at Union expense.”

The defendant is scheduled for his first appearance in court on Monday August 20, 2012 at 9 a.m. before U.S. Magistrate Judge Jan M. Adler.

DEFENDANT Criminal Case No. 12cr3429

TERENCE J. BONNER

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

One Count: Title 18, United States Code, Section 1349 – Conspiracy to commit wire fraud. Maximum penalty 5 years in prison per count.

Eleven counts: Title 18, United States Code, Section 1343 - Wire Fraud; Maximum penalty 20 years per count.

INVESTIGATING AGENCIES

Customs and Border Protection- Internal Affairs
Internal Revenue Service- Criminal Investigation
United States Department of Labor

An indictment itself is not evidence that the defendant committed the crimes charged. The defendant is presumed innocent until the Government meets its burden in court of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.